

## Grade Crossing Improvement

Governor Ryan's **Illinois First** program increased to \$2.25 million per month the amount of funding in motor fuel tax receipts that is deposited into the Grade Crossing Protection Fund. This money is used to help pay for the cost highway/rail grade crossing signal improvements, and construction or reconstruction of bridges (highways over railroads or railroads over highways) where railroads cross a county, township, road district, or municipal highway, road or street.

The Fund normally pays 85% of the cost for grade crossing signal improvements, with the local highway agency responsible for 10% of the cost and the railroad responsible for the remaining 5% plus all costs associated with operation and maintenance of the new signal equipment. The Fund also pays up to 60% of the cost of bridges. The local highway agency is responsible for the remainder.

In addition to funding capital improvements at specific railroad-highway crossings, the Commission is also responsible for overall crossing safety by insuring that crossing approaches, surfaces and signals are maintained in accordance with Commission rules.

The Transportation Division is undertaking an initiative to improve communication and operations in regard to crossing safety. Preliminary work is in progress to establish a unified database to provide a single source for all pertinent information regarding crossings, including geographic location, type and configuration of warning devices and traffic control devices, maintenance activity, improvements, etc. The Commission is working closely with the Illinois Department of Transportation and the regulated rail carriers to carry out this new program.